

REMARKS/ARGUMENTS

Reconsideration and allowance of this application are respectfully requested.
Currently, claims 1-22 and 24-26 are pending in this application.

Objections to the Specification:

The Office Action objected to the specification for various reasons. By this Amendment, a new title has been provided. While Applicant submits that the application did contain an abstract, that abstract has been canceled in favor of the new abstract attached hereto on a separate sheet. Appropriate section headings have been added into the specification. Applicant has concurrently filed an Information Disclosure Statement (IDS) which cites all of the references noted by the Examiner except the "Knowledge and Location" reference. Applicant intends to file a Supplemental Information Disclosure Statement after a copy of this reference has been found.

Applicant thus respectfully requests that the various objections to the specification be withdrawn.

Objections to the Drawings:

The drawings were objected to as failing to comply with 37 CFR 1.84(p)(5). By this Amendment, reference numbers T6-T9 have been deleted from the specification. Reference numbers 116A, 116B, 120E, 120G, 300, 600, 604 and 606 have been added to the specification. Applicant submits that no new matter has been added into the specification. Applicant therefore requests that the objection to the drawings be withdrawn.

Rejections Under 35 U.S.C. §112:

Claims 1, 6 and 8 were rejected under 35 U.S.C. §112, second paragraph, as allegedly being indefinite. Applicant submits that each element recited in these claims has a proper antecedent basis. Applicant therefore requests that the rejection of these claims under 35 U.S.C. §112, second paragraph, be withdrawn.

Rejections Under 35 U.S.C. §102 and §103:

Claims 1, 2, 4-10, 16-19 and 21-26 were rejected under 35 U.S.C. §102(b) as allegedly being anticipated by Mannings et al (WO 96-07110, hereinafter "Mannings"). Claims 3, 11-15 and 20 were rejected under 35 U.S.C. §103 as allegedly being unpatentable over Mannings. Applicant traverses these rejections.

Applicant notes that Mannings was listed as a category "A" (document defining the general state of the art which is not considered to be of particular relevance) in the International Search Report of international application no. PCT/GB99/01394. The present application is a national phase filing of international application no. PCT/GB99/01394.

For a reference to anticipate a claim, each element must be found, either expressly or under principles of inherency, in the reference. Applicant submits that Mannings fails to disclose each element of the claimed invention. For example, Applicant submits that Mannings fails to disclose or even suggest storing, in a distributed network of data storage devices accessible simultaneously from a plurality of user terminals, data defining a plurality of localities as required by independent claim 1. Independent claims 6, 8, 18

and 25 require similar features. For example, independent claims 6 and 9 require “defining, in a distributed network of data storage devices accessible simultaneously from a plurality of remote user terminals, a plurality of data access nodes each of which is responsible for a predefined locality.”

Mannings discloses a navigation information system having a **central** database. (See, e.g., page 12, lines 25-30 and page 14, lines 3-8). Mannings therefore fails to teach or suggest a **distributed** network of data storage devices accessible simultaneously from a plurality of remote user terminals for storing data defining a plurality of localities. If anything, Mannings’s teaching of a central database teaches away from the claimed distributed network of data storage devices.

Accordingly, Applicant requests that the above rejections under 35 U.S.C. §102 and §103 be withdrawn.

TITMUSS et al.
Application No. 09/647,884
January 28, 2004

Conclusion:

Applicant believes that this entire application is in condition for allowance and respectfully requests a notice to this effect. If the Examiner has any questions or believes that an interview would further prosecution of this application, the Examiner is invited to telephone the undersigned.

Respectfully submitted,

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ABSTRACT

A method of storing and/or retrieving location-based information comprises: storing, in a distributed network of data storage devices accessible simultaneously from a plurality of remote user terminals, data defining a plurality of first localities in relation to which information storage is accessible, and selecting ones of the first localities to represent second localities for which information is to be stored and/or retrieved such that i) the first and second localities bear a predetermined locational relationship, and ii) the first and second localities bear a predetermined relationship in size.